Responsibilities of Families

Statement:

Families are responsible for student safety and conduct prior to pick up and after departure from the school bus. Families are responsible for supporting the policy and procedures related to student transportation and for educating their students appropriately to support student safety.

Procedures:

Families must:

- Recognize that student transportation is a privilege, not a right, which can be suspended or revoked if expectations are not met;
- Recognize DSTS Transportation cards are provided for students, and they are to be used daily for boarding and exiting the bus. Families of students who have not been riding the bus consistently for three consecutive months or longer, will receive an automated phone notification, and their name will be removed from the bus manifest. If a student is removed from the bus manifest, families may contact DSTS at any time if they intend to use transportation services on a regular basis (905-666-6395) and 3-5 business days are required to reinstate transportation;
- Understand that the school bus is viewed as an extension of the classroom and student discipline falls under the responsibility of the principal, therefore, students are required to demonstrate the same conduct on the school bus as in the classroom;
- Inform the student with respect to safe and appropriate conduct while accessing student transportation;
- Cooperate with the school bus driver, school bus operator, DSTS and principal to ensure that the students conduct themselves in an appropriate manner on the school bus and take family responsibility should the need arise if conduct is not appropriate;
- Pay for damages resulting from vandalism and/or willful damage to the bus should the need arise;
- Remind students to respect private and personal property when waiting at a DSTS designated stop;
- Write down the bus operator and route number for their student and keep it in a safe location in case of lost items or an emergency so that you can contact the Operator;
- Arrive at the stop at least five (5) minutes prior to scheduled pick up time;
- Ensure student has DSTS Transportation Card ready for use daily for boarding and exiting the bus
    - DSTS Transportation Cards are issued and sent to the school for distribution to students
    - Students may use an electronic device to load a picture of the DSTS Transportation card which can be used as an alternative to scanning the plastic card
    - A Temporary DSTS Transportation Card can be printed from the DSTS website, and this paper copy can be used for students to take a picture of for their electronic device or the paper copy can be used until the student receives the plastic card
    - DSTS Transportation cards are to be used daily for boarding and exiting the bus. Students continue to use the same card throughout their school career if they remain eligible for student transportation services and they remain within the same school board
    - New cards are not provided annually (please keep the card in a safe place over the summer)

Responsibilities of Families (Continued)

- Respect that service is scheduled, and buses cannot wait for late arrivals;
- Have alternate arrangements for their students should unplanned circumstances, such as traffic delay/running late, occur as these are not emergencies but are items arising in daily life for which families are accountable and responsible;
- For safety reasons, all kindergarten students must be accompanied by an adult family member, daycare provider or designate at the pickup and drop off stop (Please ensure that this information is kept up to date and communicated to the school);
- Not pursue the bus if the student misses it as it creates unsafe driving conditions;
- Transportation is provided at the DSTS approved bus stop location. If the student is not at the bus stop at the designated pick-up time, it will be the responsibility of the families to arrange transportation for the student to school;
- Ensure that student belongings are labeled, and student is dressed appropriately for weather conditions;
- For the safety of all on board families are expected to provide transportation for their student when large or bulky items like projects and sports equipment must be taken to and/or from school;
- Know inclement weather procedures and where to locate information on bus delays/cancellations;
- Be the ultimate decision maker who determines whether their student travels to/from a bus stop in the event of inclement weather;
- In the spirit of safety and cooperation, inform the school of any allergy or medical conditions which exist so that the information may be communicated to DSTS and the Bus company. The bus company will ensure that the bus driver is aware of those conditions and know how to respond should a medical emergency involving your student occur while on the bus;
- Not attempt to request or negotiate special transportation arrangements with the bus operator, bus driver directly, or school principal;
- Only students and individuals who are specifically authorized by the school or DSTS may be permitted on the school bus.
- Not be intentionally confrontational or aggressive with the school bus driver. If a situation exists, the family is responsible for raising any concerns to the school principal or DSTS and not directly with the school bus driver;
- Understand that the student may not have the same bus driver consistently;
- Assist with teaching the student where to board and exit the bus and the route to travel between the stop location and home;
- Comply with the regulations regarding accompanying and meeting kindergarten students and/or any other students that have a “must be met” requirement at the stop;
- Notify the school immediately of change in address and/or change in emergency contact Information;
- Notify the school or DSTS of any situation occurring at a stop or on the bus that may have impacted student safety. Be ready with date, time, bus information, location of the incident, details and witnesses;
- Review the related policies and procedures on the DSTS website (www.dsts.on.ca) or request a written copy from the school if required;
- Families can create an account and sign up to the DSTS Family portal for notifications regarding delays and cancellations;
- Families are able to load the mTransport app on their phone, tablet or computer and sign up for mTransport notifications which indicate when the vehicle is approaching the stop, when and where the student has boarded the vehicle and exited the vehicle;
- For mTransport details and FAQ’s please go to the mTransport tab on the DSTS website.